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# WINDSOCK

August 1999

The Journal of the Southern Hang Gliding Club

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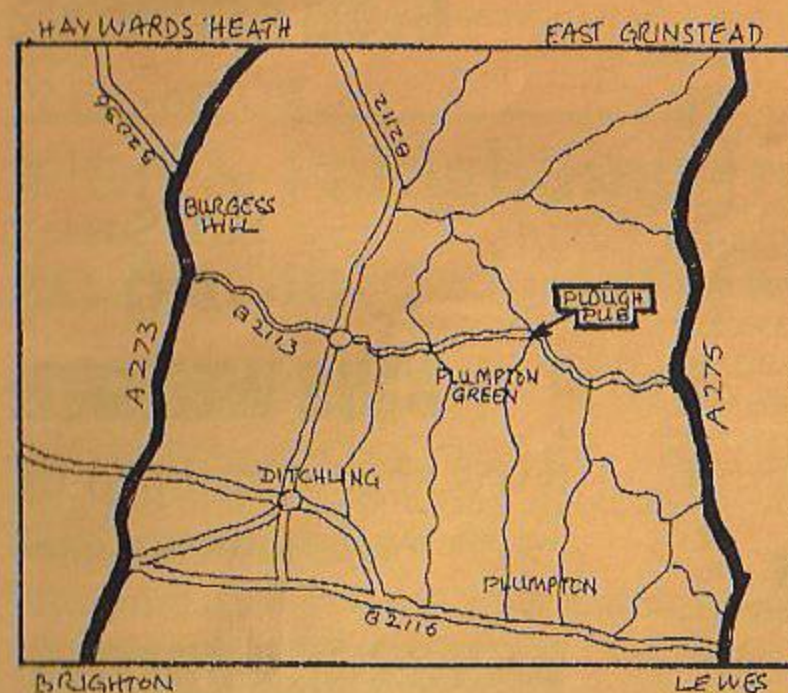
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[windsock@shgc.demon.co.uk](mailto:windsock@shgc.demon.co.uk)

## WELCOME TO THE AUGUST WINDSOCK

This is a briefer issue, since most folk seem to be out flying instead of sitting at home writing about it. This includes the Chairman, the Secretary and the Chief Coach! However, as I said in my first issue, Windsock will be on your doormat every month, even if it is a bit skinnier. We do have one full article though - from Mike Peters about the air above Zimbabwe - interesting reading, - thanks Mike!

Don't forget about the club website, and the various links available - to the XC League as well as to other clubs.

I hope everyone enjoys the 25th Anniversary bash this Saturday; Stewart Swanton has put a lot of work into it, so turn up and have a good time!

Unfortunately, I'll miss the do, since I'm going out to Le Grand Bornand (near Annecy) in my capacity as organiser of the British National Paragliding Championships and British Open. If we set up an Internet page I'll ask Gary to do a link from the club website.  
- Stewart

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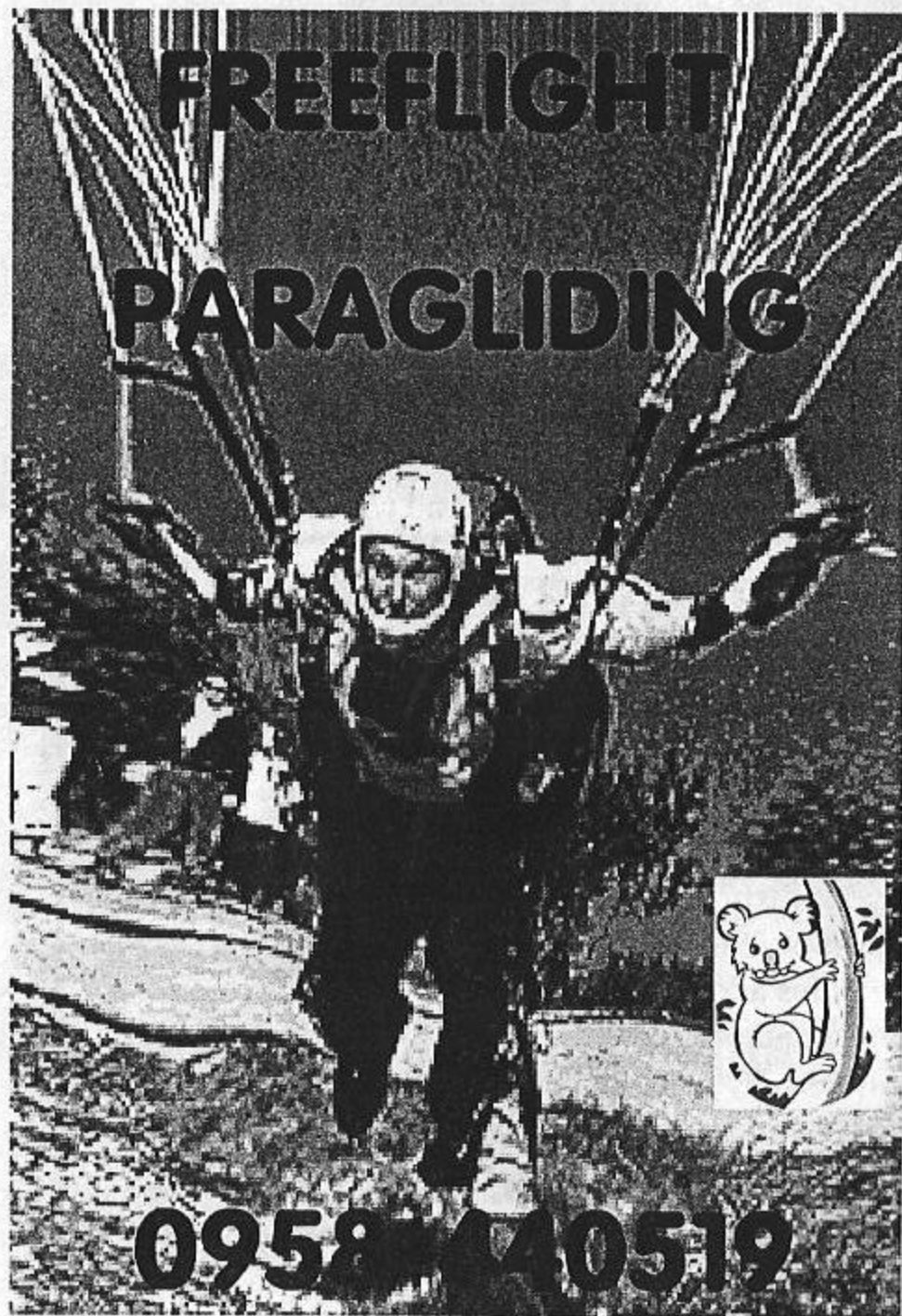
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## WINDSOCK CONTRIBUTIONS

- 1) E-mail - **NO LARGE ATTACHMENTS PLEASE!** Only small graphics/photos can be accepted - as either .gif or .jpg attachments. For articles, Microsoft Word is fine, but we accept .txt, .rtf, works, etc.
  - 2) FLOPPY DISC: formats as above.
  - 2) Typewritten articles will only be accepted in *large* clear characters for scanning (16pt or above).
  - 3) Smaller items such as notices and ads may be handwritten.
- Contributions may be edited unless the author declares "all or nothing at all".  
POST to SHGC, PO BOX 1359, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4AS  
E-MAIL to [windsock@shgc.demon.co.uk](mailto:windsock@shgc.demon.co.uk)  
WINDSOCK DEADLINE - First of the month - *first come first served!*

## AIRWAVE CHALLENGE 1999

On the weekend of July 26th, the Southern Club flew in the Semi's of the Hang Gliding Airwave Challenge.

We had one brilliant day's flying off from the Mynd with Craig Dolwin flying 85km. He practically single-handedly took his team to fifth place. Our other team managed a concerted effort, and squeezed into third place. We now have two teams in the final to take place on The Blorenge on 4th and 5th September.

Anyone wishing to compete - please 'phone Ozzie on 01273 418293.

## WINDSOCK ADVERTISING PRICES

No. issues	1/4 page	1/2 page	full page
1	£8.00	£14.00	£25.00
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## THE HANG GLIDING LEAGUES from Ozzie

### Martini League

Name	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	TOTAL
Steve Cook	180.0 DF	180.0 DF	180 DF	115.0		655.0
Johnny Carr	180.0 DF	70.0	35.0			285.0
Dave	99.0	90.0	37.0	23.0		249.0
Trevor	135.0 DF	51.5	27.0	5.5		219.0
Ozzie	60.0	59.0	44.0	33.5	19.0	195.5
John Young	55.0	36.5	30.5	27.5	25.5	175.0
Will	159.0 DF					159.0
Darren	40.0					40.0

### Weekend League

Name	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	TOTAL
Steve	180.0 DF	180.0 DF				360.0
Dave	99.0	90.0	37.0	23.0		249.0
Johnny	180.0 DF	35.0				215.0
Ozzie	60.0	59.0	33.5	19.0		171.5
Trevor	51.5	27.0	5.5			84.0
John Young	30.5	27.5	25.5			82.5
Darren	40.0					40.0

### Sussex League

Name	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	TOTAL
Steve	180.0 DF	180.0 DF	180.0 DF			540.0
Dave	99.0	90.0	37.0	23.0		249.0
Trevor	135.0 DF	51.5	27.0	55.0		219.0
Johnny	180.0 DF	35.0				215.0
Ozzie	60.0	59.0	33.5	19.0		171.5
Will	159.0 DF					159.0
John Young	55.0	27.5	25.5			108.0
Darren	40.0					40.0

### Aerotow League

Name	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	TOTAL
Will	159.0 DF					159.0
Dave	99.0					99.0
Ozzie	33.5	19.0	10.0			62.5
John Young	55.0					55.0



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## FLYING IN ZIMBABWE

### by Mike Peters

We (family of four) flew out at the end of March which is towards the end of Zim's rainy season and their summer officially to see friends and family but un-officially to take the opportunity to do some flying. On arriving I immediately got about locating one of only twelve paraglider pilots and arranged for some accompanied flying to be done. Having never flown abroad I was very keen to fly with the locals. Conditions can be strong with cloudbases often exceeding 8000ft by midday. Unfortunately the first weekend was blown out and because we were on a camping holiday keeping to pre-booked sites we had to move on. We drove down to a place called Chimanimani for those who know Zim., is situated on the eastern highlands. I can only describe the terrain as similar to that of the Lake District. Here the prevailing dry winds sweep in from Mozambique from the SE, hit the escarpment and are forced up and over, forming clouds. The clouds then form into good well defined cumulus and drift away over the dry hard baked ground of the interior. Having got in late that evening we set up camp with (non flying)brother-in-law and recced likely take off sites. Directly in front of the camp site was a large hill rising to about 1500m. The next morning the prevailing wind as regular as ever was hitting it smack on. Eager to have a go, but also very conscious of the fact that there was

no other person flying and the fact that this may never have been flown before we four adults, my two kids, their three, set off in his ten man overlander at 6am up the bumpy road leading around this hill. I had discovered this hill was named "Pork Pie" The girls later re named it something else. We drove for less than forty minutes before we were halted by the track narrowing making it impassible for the truck. A good four wheel vehicle would have been ideal. Having positioned the truck downhill and having a good hearty breakfast we set off following the track. Up and up we went, two hours we were still walking. My name was becoming mud and the ladies had renamed the hill as "Pork B\*\*\*\*\*d!" The two families had spread out, the kids had disappeared and nobody was talking anymore. Eventually we got to the top to be met with a fabulous view of Chimamani mountains in the distance. Below us lay the campsite. Time now was nearing 10.30am. Anxious to fly before the conditions became too strong and waiting for the girls to catch up I began to scout around for a likely take off site. The top of the hill I found was tree-less and the grass is similar to tundra. Spraining an ankle in the deep grass is possible. Moment of truth, girls had finally arrived swearing profusely. I decided to get airborne before they worked out that it was still a long walk back down. Having done a more than thorough pre-flight check and battling the nerves I tentatively popped the canopy above my head not knowing what the air would be like, turned around and

walked forward still some twenty feet away from the drop into space. The game plan was to allow me to feel what the air was doing via the brake pressure and give me a bit more time to abort or take off. The girls and kids had suddenly woken up and Carol,my brother-in-law's wife who had never seen a paraglider until this moment suddenly cried out "Oh my god he's going to jump over the edge.!"

Moving forward all the time I thought "Well here goes - all or nothing, and launched myself. At first as I travelled out over the valley - nothing. I was only conscious of the enormous feeling of height, sharp rocks, ravines and gullies below me. Then suddenly - bang - the canopy lurched rearwards, my hand instinctively went straight up against the pulleys, willing the Airwave Samba to bite the air and pitch forward. I put in a turn to the left conscious I was going up rapidly. For the next 20 minutes I soared just in front of the hill whooping and shouting down at the kids who were running along the ridge. I began to relax more and tried to study likely areas of lift. Behind the hill I could see the timber mills, smoke rising from their chimneys surrounded by pine forests. Still further beyond the pine forests I could see the land drop down into the hot interior away from the escarpment. In front of me I had a wonderful view of the mountains which run north to south for as far as the eye can see. This made bringing the glider out all worth it. I managed to pop off some nervous photos not really wanting to leave the brakes alone for too long. I was discovering that

it was relatively easy to stay in lift as the thermals were large and reasonably strong for the morning but because I am heavy the brake pressures are too and found myself having to hang on in the turns to prevent been spat out. With strong lift I also found enormous amounts of sink. At one point I was literally dropping out the sky. On reflection I suppose that was quite comforting in case you suddenly were hoovered uncontrollably upwards. At one point my digifly read 2000m ato. Pork Pie below me looked flat and insignificant. I then unashamedly lost my bottle to go higher and further and began to make up all sorts of negative excuses. Hadn't briefed the family where I was likely to go, where would I land, pine forests, crash against another hill miles away from the nearest road. The list was endless. With hands up against the brake pulleys and speed bar on I headed out over the valley away from Pork Pie which quickly grew bigger as I hit sink after sink. Having picked out a landing spot from the take off site the field now that I was nearer looked totally unsatisfactory. How many of you have had that awful feeling of oh s\*\*t where am I going to land. I lined up for what looked like a relatively flat field on a slight slope and in I came. About 400 feet agl I realized my ground speed was a lot faster than I had expected. I was sinking so quickly that the field I had picked was now almost unreachable. Committed, I kept on, testing the brakes to see how much of a flare was needed. Almost no reaction from the wing told me this was going to be fast. I came in

just short of the field landing in head high thick pampas grass with both feet. The grass took most of the impact and prevented me from running off the speed. The glider flew on over me before crumpling in a heap, lines everywhere. I was down safe in one piece and had finally flown abroad. Suddenly I felt exhausted as I think you must do in these circumstances; I was on such a high, the digifly had only recorded 30mins but it felt like hours. The heat was suffocating in the grass, not a breath of wind and I was beginning to sweat with the flying suit/gloves etc. Stripping off I set about packing the glider and fighting my way out onto a dirt road not far away. Still with the feeling of elation I set off briskly back to the camp site. To lessen the blow I collapsed camp and sat down to await the rest of the tribe. The wives informed me that had I not flown having made them climb "Pork B\*\*\*\*\*d" they would have thrown me off!! I suspect that's not far from the truth. Sadly that was to be the end of my flying in Zim as later I tore the canopy trying to take off with a crowd of Zim guys just north of Harare. Basic repairing of canopies in the country is nigh on impossible with South Africa being the nearest back up. For those interested in flying over there and wanting to know more about the country I have placed a separate article in Skywings giving details of who to contact and locations of flying sites etc. Alternatively drop me a line for a chat.

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Announcements will appear in three issues - so please let Windsock know as soon as you get a result.

## WINDSOCK

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